

(a) the number of street children in the country, particularly in the metropolitan cities as on March 31, 1996;

(b) whether the Union Government have taken steps for the rehabilitation of street children and abolition of child begging and to save them from exploitation;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Union Government so far to implement the child related provisions of different Labour Laws in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) No National Survey has been attempted to ascertain the number of street children in the country. However, studies were sponsored in 1992, jointly by the Govt. and UNICEF in 8 cities of the country, namely Hyderabad, Bangalore, Indore, Mumbai, Madras, Kanpur, Calcutta and Delhi. According to these studies there were 1.10 lakh street children in Delhi and 0.40 lakh street children in Madras. Data regarding number of street children in other cities has not been indicated in the studies.

(b) and (c) The Govt. of India launched a scheme for welfare of Street Children during the 8th Five Year Plan. The Scheme is being implemented since 1993-94. Under this Scheme 90% grant-in-aid is provided to the Voluntary Organisations on the recommendations of the State Governments for the development of Street Children providing them nutritional support, preventive health care, counselling, protection against abuse and exploitation and literacy support.

There is no central law applicable in the whole country for prevention and control of beggary. At present 16 State Governments and 2 Union Territories have, however, enacted their own laws. In so far as child begging is concerned, the Juvenile Justice Act, 1986, which extends to the whole of India except the State of J&K, makes the employment of juveniles for begging a cognizable offence punishable with imprisonment and also liable to fine. To give effect to the various provisions of this Act, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Prevention and Control of Juvenile Social maladjustment is being implemented since 1986-87 to provide financial assistance to State Govts./U.Ts. Further, under the Central Sector scheme for Beggary Prevention, financial assistance is given to State Governments/Union Territories and eligible voluntary organisations for establishing work centres for providing technical education and vocational training to the beggars.

(d) The Ministry of Labour has taken several steps for elimination and rehabilitation of child labour. According to the National Child Labour Policy, 1987, the problem of child labour is being tackled through (i) Legislation (ii) General Development Programmes for the benefit of children and (iii) Implementation of National Child Labour Projects. A comprehensive law, namely the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 already exists to prohibit the employment of children in 7 occupations and

18 Processes. Government has taken a major programme for rehabilitation of about 2.00 million working children in hazardous occupations by the year 2002. So far 76 National Child Labour Projects have been sanctioned in the Child Labour endemic States to cover 1.5 lakh children through special schools, where they are provided non-formal educations, Vocational Training, Stipend, Nutrition, health checks etc. In addition, Voluntary agencies are also being financially assisted to the extent of 75% for taking up welfare projects for working children.

#### **Scheduled Caste Status to Muslims**

5537. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether 'All India Backward Muslim Morcha' has asked the Government to prove its "secular credentials" by scrapping Article 341 (3) of the Constitution which accorded Scheduled Caste status only to members belonging to the Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist communities;

(b) if so, whether the Government has examined their view point ;

(c) if so, the Government's reaction to this proposal; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) In a representation dated 20.12.95 the All India Backward Muslim Morcha have sought, in respect of "Muslim Dalits", removal of the bar on persons professing religions other than Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism being deemed to be members of Scheduled Castes, on the ground that it discriminates against them. This bar is contained in the Orders specifying Scheduled Castes issued under Article 341 (1) of the Constitution, as amended to date under Article 341 (2).

(b) to (d) The matter is being examined.

[Translation]

#### **Outstanding Amount Dues to Sugarcane Growers**

5538. SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH :  
SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS  
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether despite High Court's orders and assurance made by P.M., the outstanding dues of sugarcane growers have not been cleared till date;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government are aware of the news report 'Flouting of HC orders on sugarcane dues set back to PM' published in 'Indian Express' dated August 8, 1996;

(d) if so, the facts reported therein; and

(e) the reaction of the Government thereto ?